# Huronia District Crown Land Planning Program

## Preliminary Management Plan

Ontario
Ministry of Natural Resources
Hon. Vincent G. Kerrio
Minister
Mary Mogford
Deputy Minister

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# Planning Program

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Huronia District Crown land planning area is approximately 27,000 ha (66,700 acres) in size and is located in the northeast corner of the Huronia Administrative District, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (Figure 1). It contains portions of six municipalities. The Townships of Matchedash, Orillia and Rama are within the County of Simcoe; the Townships of Georgian Bay, Muskoka Lakes and the Town of Gravenhurst are within the District Municipality of Muskoka. The Severn River forms a portion of the boundary between the County and the District Municipality and cuts the study area approximately in half.

The Crown land planning program has evolved directly from the Huronia District Land Use Guidelines which were approved in 1983. During the public review of the draft District Guidelines, one of the most contentious issues was a proposal to establish a nature reserve in Matchedash Township. As a result of the public concerns the proposed Matchedash nature reserve was deleted from the list of candidate parks. However, it was recognized that the proposed nature reserve had important natural values so the District Guidelines committed the ministry to the preparation of a special Crown land management plan for the former Candidate park.

The Guidelines also presented four basic terms of reference for the planning process:

- detailed consideration will be given to determining how the protection objectives can best be met;
- the significant contribution of the existing uses, (fishing, hunting, trapping, snowmobiling) to fish and wildlife and general recreation targets will be recognized in the planning;
- the study will recommend whether any portion of the area should be considered for park designation; and
- the planning process will provide for full public involvement.

The ministry has decided that long term management of the former candidate park would be studied within the context of the total Crown land area of the Huronia District. This approach permits comparative evaluation of all Crown land and water areas to be made and will enable the ministry to make more fully informed management decisions.

Resource production and recreation opportunity targets for the study area are presented in this plan. They are based upon the Huronia District targets contained in the District Land Use Guidelines. The plan provides direction for resource managers to the year 2000 on where and how these targets will be achieved in the study area. In some cases, more detailed management and operational plans will be prepared (e.g. a forest management plan, a management plan for the Swift Rapids, (formerly the Wood deer yard), and provincial park management plans).

The Crown lands within the planning area are part of a mosaic which includes private, municipal and federal lands. To the greatest extent possible this plan will be compatible with other land use plans prepared by municipal and federal agencies. This plan only directly affects the management of provincial Crown land.

An indispensable part of the planning process is the public consultation program. Two phases of public consultation have occurred prior to preparation of this preliminary plan document. In the summer of 1985 terms of reference were released and two information sessions for municipal councillors and local interest groups were hosted to publicize the program and identify issues and concerns. In June 1986, over 300 copies of an Issues Paper were circulated to interested individuals, local, provincial and national interest groups, municipalities and other government agencies. The resulting comments were carefully considered during the development of this plan. (Appendix A)

The third phase of the public consultation program involves wide distribution of this document with a request for comments, followed by information sessions. The sessions are scheduled for September 27 at Stanton House, Port Stanton and September 28 at the Baxter Community Centre, Port Severn. As before, public input will be instrumental in the evolution of the final integrated resource management plan.

This document contains general policy statements on environment, integrated resource management, access, tourism/economic development and CORTS policies. These are followed by sections dealing with specific resource management programs; timber, mineral aggregate, fisheries, wildlife, areas of natural and scientific interest, parks, general recreation, land and water. For each resource program, objectives and targets are listed and an analysis section outlines current production and management programs and discusses the resource potential. Finally, a management strategy states where and how the objectives and targets will be achieved. In most cases the strategy selected reflects public response to the management options presented in the Issues Discussion Paper.

A portion of Georgian Bay of Lake Huron is within the planning area. Management strategies in this plan do not pertain to the bay. The Georgian Bay fishery within the planning area differs significantly from the inland fishery and is managed as a component of the entire Georgian Bay basin. Recreational activity on the bay, especially boating, is not confined to the planning area and the ministry's authority over boating has not been defined.

## 2. GENERAL POLICIES

### 2.1 ENVIRONMENT

On the Crown lands the ministry will conduct its activities in an environmentally responsible manner.

Identifying and conserving unique, representative or endangered physical, biological, cultural and historical features will be a responsibility shared among all programs active in the study area. Renewable resources will be managed on a biologically sound basis. Non-renewable resources will be managed to meet current demands while recognizing future requirements.

Environmental impacts may result from ministry activities on the Crown lands, however, all activities will be subject to the Environmental Assessment Act. Where impacts occur, mitigation and/or rehabilitation measures will be implemented as part of the environmental assessment process.

## 2.2 PUBLIC SAFETY

The ministry will seek to eliminate injury, loss of life and to minimize property damage resulting from floods and forest fires.

The ministry will promote the safe pursuit of outdoor recreation and resource production activities.

All of the Crown lands except those in the Township of Rama are within the Provincial Fire Region. Within this region the ministry assumes the primary responsibility for wildfire prevention and control. Ministry fire management staff operate from the Severn Falls Fire Headquarters, centrally located in the planning area.

Outside the region the municipalities have the greater responsibility and the ministry's specialized knowledge is made available informally upon request or formally by agreement.

## 2.3 INTEGRATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Integrated resource management is the coordination of resource management programs and activities so that long term benefits are optimized and conflicts between programs are minimized. Integrated resource management is the central management philosophy to be used by ministry staff to achieve goals, objectives and targets. Integration of resource management programs is intended to ensure the most efficient use of land and water.

The ministry will:

. apply the concept of multiple use to land and water management; The ministry will in most cases undertake two or more compatible activities on the same areas concurrently or sequentially recognizing that in some circumstances management of areas for a single purpose such as extraction, protection or recreation may be necessary. This plan identifies those areas which are to be managed for a single purpose.

. ensure that each resource management program contributes to the

achievement of other program objectives, to the extent possible;

Individual resource management plans including those for forestry, wildlife management and Provincial parks will contain policies which address achievement of as many ministry objectives as possible.

.Approve resource management initiatives after they have been reviewed by the District Management Committee which is composed of the District Manager and all program supervisors.

Strategies for each resource management program (Section 3) include statements on the ways in which the objectives of other programs can be recognized.

## 2.4 ACCESS

The existing network of access facilities including Crown land access roads and land/water access points will be maintained. This network and the current maintenance program represent minimum standards. Access facilities are of benefit to a wide variety of user groups and to all resource management programs.

Expansion of the network may be required to:

.provide adequate opportunities for access to land by boaters on Georgian Bay and the Severn River;

.permit development of cottage access roads by groups/associations of cottagers; or

.provide road access for resource management activities including harvesting/extraction.

Detailed information and management strategies are presented in General Recreation and Land Administration sections.

Access to Crown lands in the Township of Matchedash and the Town of Gravenhurst would be affected by development of a proposed, provincial highway linkage between Coldwater and Gravenhurst. This proposal is currently included in the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Communications 11 to 20 year construction program. Route selection has not been made.

## 2.5 TOURISM/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Ministry of Natural Resources, as the major land holder in the planning area, has the opportunity to influence economic development and tourism activity. Tourism in the planning area benefits from the recreational opportunities and support facilities available on Crown lands. In addition, resource harvesting such as trapping stimulates economic activity locally.

Traditional outdoor recreation and resource harvesting activities will continue to benefit the local economy. Together with municipalities and private enterprise the ministry will also consider additional ways that land and resource management can contribute to local economic benefits.

Where appropriate, small areas of Crown land may be made available to commercial enterprises but only where it can be clearly established that use of Crown land is required by a new or existing business to secure its economic viability and where there are no conflicts with ministry programs.

## 2.6 CONTRIBUTION TO CANADA-ONTARIO RIDEAU TRENT-SEVERN CORRIDOR (CORTS) POLICIES

The Trent-Severn portion of the CORTS Corridor, one of Canada's prime recreational resources, bisects the planning area. The Ministry of Natural Resources, through its management programs and activities on the Crown lands, will contribute to implementation of policies established to direct the actions of federal, provincial and municipal governments pertaining to recreational development and growth in the corridor. Through implementation of this Crown land management plan, the ministry will contribute to the following policies:

- .formulation of land use plans;
- .protection of open space from inappropriate use;
- .support of tourism and recreation through identification and intensive management of significant wildlife and fisheries habitat; and
- .support of tourism and recreation through provision of recreation facilities such as access points and trails for hiking skiing and horseback riding.

# 3. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICIES

## 3.1 FOREST MANAGEMENT

### 3.1.1 Objectives

The objectives for the forest management program are to:

- . protect soil and water resources from the harmful effects of erosion and improper logging operations;
- . produce high quality forest products;
- . provide and protect forest habitat for wildlife; and

. provide suitable conditions for recreational activity.

3.1.2 Targets

To produce an average annual supply of 5000 cubic metres of wood products by the year 2000.

3.1.3 Resource Analysis

The limited forest resources of the planning area result from thin soils, poor soil moisture conditions and steep slopes. Less than 28 percent (6500 ha) of the forested Crown lands can be classified as production forest (i.e. forest that has the potential to produce commercial timber). Average annual forest productivity within the study area ranges between $0.7m^3$/ha/yr and $3m^3$/ha/yr. This compares to an average potential productivity for the production forest lands elsewhere in the district of over $5m^3$/ha/yr.

Low productivity of the forest combined with lack of past management activity now requires extensive tending over the next 20-30 years before significant commercial harvest cuts can occur on suitable sites. Consequently, harvest cuts are not likely within the time frame of this plan.

Over the past 30 years, production of forest products from Crown land has been very limited and for the last 10 years, most timber cutting has occurred as part of wildlife habitat improvement projects in the Swift Rapids deer yard. Some scattered fuelwood harvesting has also been occurring in accessible locations.

Tending cuts will be directed at the hard maple, poplar and white pine working groups. Hard maple cuts will result in the establishment of all aged stands. In the poplar working groups, conversion of stands to white pine will be the primary objective. In white pine, thinning and cleaning will produce more uniform spacing and benefit immature white pine.

Some areas are suitable for site preparation involving scarifcation, followed by planting. Planting will consist mainly of conifer species (i.e. white pine).

Some limited road improvement may be required for forest management purposes. These improvements will be limited to temporary resource access roads connected to existing facilities such as the Swift Road, cottage access roads and municipal roads. These temporary roads will permit equipment access required for management operations as well as for removal of wood products.

The Huronia District Land Use Guidelines indicated 31 percent of the district timber production or $47,000m^3$/yr would be produced from the Crown lands. More detailed examination of the forest resources has indicated that the actual production forest area on the Crown lands (6500 ha) is only 30 percent of the Crown land production forest area

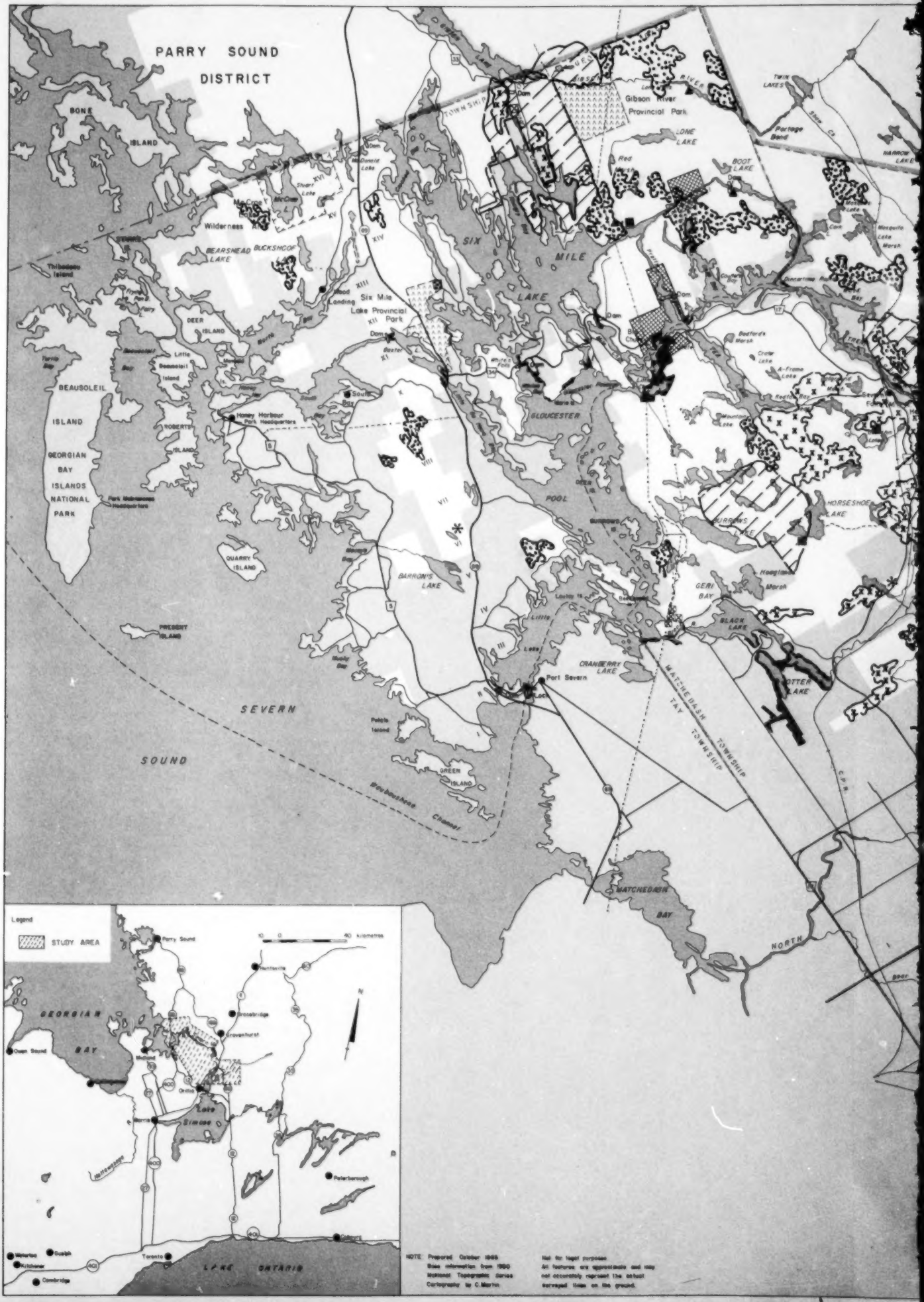
PARRY SOUND DISTRICT
BONE ISLAND
Wilderness
BEARSHEAD LAKE
BUCKSHOT
Thibadeau Island
DEER ISLAND
Six Mile Lake Provincial Park
Wood Landing
Honey Harbour Park Headquarters
BEAUSOLEIL ISLAND
GEORGIAN BAY ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK
Park Maintenance Headquarters
ROBERTS ISLAND
QUARRY ISLAND
PRESENT ISLAND
SEVERN SOUND
Port Severn
BARRON'S LAKE
GERI BAY
POOL
GLOUCESTER
SIX MILE LAKE
BOOT LAKE
LONE LAKE
Gibson River Provincial Park
Portage Road
HARROW LAKE
TWIN LAKES
HORSESHOE LAKE
BLACK LAKE
CRANBERRY LAKE
OTTER LAKE
MATCHEDASH TAY
MATCHEDASH TOWNSHIP
MATCHEDASH BAY
NORTH
Hoogland Marsh
Mosquito Lake Marsh
Bedford's Marsh
Potato Island
GREER ISLAND
Beausoleil Channel
Legend
STUDY AREA
Parry Sound
Huntsville
Bracebridge
Gravenhurst
Owen Sound
Barrie
Orillia
Lake Simcoe
GEORGIAN BAY
Peterborough
Toronto
Waterloo
Guelph
Kitchener
Cambridge
LAKE ONTARIO
NOTE Prepared October 1985
Base information from 1980 National Topographic Series
Cartography by C.Martin
Not for legal purposes
All features are approximate and may not accurately represent the actual surveyed lines on the ground.

Figure 1

# PRIORITY TIMBER STANDS AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

Ministry of Natural Resources Ontario

## HURONIA DISTRICT CROWN LAND PLANNING AREA

1000 0 1000 5000 METRES

- Crown Land
- Patented Land
- Provincial Park
- Indian Reserve
- Provincial Highway
- County or Municipal Road
- Local Road
- Crown Land Access Road
- Power Transmission Line
- Hamlet
- **High Priority Timber Stands**
- **Low Priority Timber Stands**
- Commercial Outpost
- Recreation Camp
- Trapline Cabin
- Landfill Site
- Crown Land Quarry Permit
- Hydro Power Station
- Water - Power Lease (W.P.L. 51)
- **Trent - Severn Waterway Lands**
- **Significant Biological Area**
- Agreement Forest

BRACEBRIDGE DISTRICT

MINDEN DISTRICT

N

NOTE: Prepared October 1980
Base information from 1980 National Topographic Series
Cartography by C. Martin

Not for legal purposes
All features are approximate and may not accurately represent the actual surveyed lines on the ground.

figure used in the District Guidelines. This change will be reflected in the next revision of the guidelines.

3.1.4 Forest Management Stategy

(i) A detailed Crown land forest management plan will be prepared by Forest Management staff for approval of the District Management Committee.

(ii) Initially (within the first five years of the planning period) management operations will occur in the most productive stands (mapped as high priority stands) with existing road access (Figure 1). In order to improve the condition of the forest, tending and improvement operations will be carried out on approximately 170 ha of Crown forest annually.

(iii) Forest management operations will incorporate management techniques that benefit wildlife habitat especially in deer wintering yards. Within these yards, habitat improvement will be the single most important forest management objective. Production of forest products may not always result from operations in these areas. Forestry staff will collaborate with wildlife staff on the specific objectives and operating procedures for each project in these areas.

(iv) Within provincially significant areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSI) commercial harvest or stand improvement cuts will not occur. Protection of the significant resources for which each ANSI has been recognized will be an over-riding management objective in these areas. The only forest management activities which may occur in these areas are: spraying of stands or portions of stands to control forest diseases or insects when they threaten to destroy significant features and fire suppression. Consultation with parks and recreation program staff will occur prior to any spraying.

(v) Within regionally significant ANSI's forest management may include commercial timber harvest cuts as well as other management techniques however, consultation with parks and recreation staff will occur prior to harvest cuts.

(vi) Forest management operations will, whenever possible, avoid all recognized recreational trails. When impact on these trails cannot be avoided, any damage to trail surfaces will be repaired after completion of operations. Mitigation methods will be implemented in advance of the operations where feasible.

(vii) Within Six Mile Lake Provincial Park and the Gibson River Provincial Nature Reserve vegetation management must conform to park management plans which will reflect Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies.

## 3.2 MINERAL AGGREGATE

### 3.2.1 Objective

The objective for mineral aggregate production on the Crown lands is to provide sufficient supplies to meet anticipated local demand with minimal disturbance to natural resources.

### 3.2.2 Target

No target has been established because all production of mineral aggregate from Crown land is consumed within the local area where local demands are highly variable but comparatively low.

### 3.2.3 Resource Analysis

Annual production of mineral aggregate from four licenced pits located on Crown land has ranged from 1,000 to 5,500 metric tonnes in recent years. These pits are administered by quarry permits issued under the authority of the Mining Act. This act is administrated by the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines however, authority to issue quarry permits for Crown land has been delegated to the Ministry of Natural Resources.

The potential for mineral aggregate production from the Crown lands is very low, and is limited to small, scattered pockets of sands and gravels. Small quarries producing crushed stone have operated in the past and with the planned twinning of Highway 69 demand for this product will increase significantly.

### 3.2.4 Mineral Aggregate Management Strategy

(i) Control of mineral aggregate utilization from Crown land will be achieved through the Mining Act. Holders of quarry permits will be required to rehabilitate depleted sites to the satisfaction of ministry staff.

(ii) There will be no aggregate extraction in provincial parks or within provincially significant Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI). Within regionally significant ANSI's extraction may occur but prior consultation with parks and recreation staff will occur.

## 3.3 FISHERIES

### 3.3.1 Objectives

The objectives of the fisheries management program for the water bodies of the planning area (excluding Georgian Bay) are to:

- provide sportfishing opportunities;

- provide economic benefits related to production of baitfish; and

. protect, improve and rehabilitate fisheries habitat and fish population;

### 3.3.2 Targets

To provide 143,000 angler days of sport fishing annually on the lakes and rivers of the Crown land planning area by the year 2000 and to maintain current fishing success rates of 0.5 kg/angler day to yield 71,000 kg of fish per year.

To provide 9700 dozen baitfish annually.

To ensure that no native fish species become extinct.

### 3.3.3 Resource Analysis

Sportfishing occurs throughout the planning area but four waterbodies, Six Mile Lake, Sparrow Lake, Gloucester Pool and the Severn River are particularly important. Together they represent 70 percent of the 7200 ha of water area and 75 percent of fishing activity in the study area.

The area supports 124,000 angler days of sport fishing annually. The current harvest of sport fish resulting from this activity is 62,000 kg.

The lakes and rivers of the study area are situated on the Canadian Shield. It is recognized that these water bodies are generally less productive than those in non-shield areas to the south. Sparrow Lake, Little Lake and Gloucester Pool are considered to be more productive than the shield lakes but less so than non-shield lakes. The Severn River is classified as a warm water river and while it is situated on the shield it is significantly more productive than the inland lakes.

Three of the lakes (Six Mile, McCrae and Woodland) are classified as coldwater lakes because they contain or could maintain self sustaining populations of lake trout. The remaining lakes are warm water lakes.

The sportfish found in the area include walleye, yellow perch, largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, black crappie, northern pike, muskellunge, and lake trout. In many of the smaller lakes largemouth bass and yellow perch are the only sport species present. Smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, walleye and northern pike are more common in the larger lakes. Muskellunge are found throughout the Trent-Severn Waterway as well as in Long and Morrison Lakes while black crappie are found in Gloucester Pool and Dumbell Lake.

The larger more productive water bodies tend to be underutilized. This is occurring in spite of good accessibility. Fish populations in many of the smaller inland lakes may be subject to over exploitation even though access is restricted to walk/canoe/fly-in methods. Some of the smallest remote lakes do not contain sport fish species.

The waters of the planning area have very good potential to provide quality sport fishing opportunities as measured by angler success rates. While increases in fishing pressure are likely to occur on most waters, it will have the greatest impact on the small inland lakes. In many cases increased monitoring will be required to determine fishing pressure and harvest. Some of the smaller lakes will be assessed and adults of desirable species may be stocked to increase fishing opportunities.

The impact of acid rain on district water bodies is currently unknown. Collection of substantial data, over an extended period, will be required to permit accurate evaluations to be made.

Management priorities will favour rehabilitation programs for those high quality fisheries with the highest utilization rates and where populations are under pressure. Within the planning area the Severn River system and Six Mile Lake are the most heavily utilized water bodies.

The commercial harvesting of baitfish in the planning area is a minor activity. The current annual commercial baitfish harvest from the planning area is approximately 9,600 dozen which is less than three percent of the district harvest (not including Lake Simcoe). Six licenced bait fishermen are active in the area.

There are no endangered fish species in the planning area.

3.3.4 Fisheries Management Strategy

The management strategy will be augmented by policies and guidelines to be contained in the Huronia District Fisheries Management Plan.

The following management measures are to be directed at the water bodies of greatest importance. Sparrow Lake, Gloucester Pool/Black Lake, Six Mile Lake, Severn River, McCrae Lake, Long Lake, Woodland Lake.

(i) Known areas of critical spawning and nursery habitat will be protected whenever possible. These areas are most threatened on water bodies with cottage and permanent residential development on the shorelands.

Dredging to facilitate boat access, dumping of fill in water or removal of aquatic vegetation to create structures or to create vegetation free swimming and boating areas are the three key activities to be controlled. Control of habitat destruction will be achieved primarily through enforcement of regulations under the Public Lands Act on water bodies off the Trent-Severn Waterway. On the Trent-Severn Waterway, the ministry will continue to co-operate with Waterway staff through a development proposal review process.

(ii) Fisheries resource data collection and analysis will be a major activity. Population, habitat and fishing pressure are the

elements which will be studied most intensively. In addition, studies to evaluate the impact of acid rain on fisheries will be initiated.

(iii) Stocking of hatchery reared fish and transferring of adults from one lake to another may occur as a means of rehabilitating reduced populations. Stocking will only occur where it is believed that self sustaining populations may result. Lake trout will likely be the only hatchery reared species stocked and Six Mile, Woodland and McCrae Lakes have been identified as most suited for this technique. Adult transfers to establish new populations will involve largemouth bass and northern pike. No target water bodies have been identified for this technique.

(iv) Projects designed to artificially improve/create spawning and nursery habitat on all water bodies in the planning area will be encouraged and supported by the ministry through the Community Fisheries Improvement Program. The target species for these projects will usually be walleye and muskellunge.

(v) Restrictions may be needed to remove excessive fishing pressure from the inland lakes. These restrictions will most often involve limiting the number of boat caches on specific lakes through a licencing system.

(vi) Within Provincial Parks fisheries management will conform to Ontario Provinicial Parks Planning and Management Policies and to the management plan for each park. Baitfish harvesting will not be permitted within the Gibson River Provincial Nature Reserve. Some fisheries assessment activities may be conducted.

(vii) Fisheries management proposals for provincially significant life science areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSI's) will be reviewed by parks staff. Generally, sportfishing and baitfish harvesting will be permitted in ANSI's as will fisheries assessment activities but some management activities may be excluded.

Within regionally significant ANSI's most fisheries management activities will be permitted but prior consultation with parks and recreation staff will be required.

(viii) Fisheries management programs which may affect inter-regional water bodies will be discussed and co-ordinated with ministry staff in the Minden, Bracebridge and Parry Sound Districts.

## 3.4 WILDLIFE

### 3.4.1 Objectives

The objective of the wildlife management program is to provide opportunities for social and economic benefits from wildlife oriented recreation and fur harvest consistent with the maintenance of healthy wildlife populations.

More specifically to:

- provide an increased number of high quality hunting opportunities;

- at least maintain the current production of high quality fur pelts from wild furbearer populations;

- maintain the diversity of wildlife species; and

- provide for wildlife viewing, scientific investigation and educational opportunities.

3.4.2 Targets

- To provide, by the year 2000, 9,850 opportunities of hunting recreation per annum. This will consist of 4,000 opportunities of small game hunting, 2,200 opportunities of waterfowl hunting, 2,800 opportunities of big game hunting and 850 opportunities of archery hunting.

- To manage populations of furbearers to produce an average annual harvest of 5,100 pelts.

- To ensure no provincially rare and endangered wildlife species become extinct.

3.4.3 Resource Analysis

Current hunting activity consists of 3,600 small game, 1,950 waterfowl and 2,700 big game hunting occasions using shotguns and rifles. The area also supplies 750 hunting occasions for archers. White tailed deer and black bear are the only big game species sought by hunters in the area.

Hunting opportunities are controlled by wildlife numbers, suitable habitat, access and type and length of seasons. The potential for improving wildlife habitat is fair to good and is concentrated in two large significant biological areas totalling approximately 8,000 ha. These areas, as well as numerous smaller ones, are characterized by greater soil depths and a wider variety of vegetative types capable of satisfying the habitat requirements of a diverse mixture of wildlife species. The area contains a complex network of water resources including ponds, marshes, bogs and swamps which support a resident waterfowl population. Many of these are staging areas for migrating waterfowl.

While the entire Crown land area has a liberal open season on a variety of game species, access to the interior limits utilization. Small game hunting opportunities are thought to be most constrained by this factor. A trend toward increased use of seasonal residences as hunting camps will likely continue and will assist in achievement of the big game and waterfowl hunting targets. The combined hunting recreation target is 13 percent higher than estimated current levels. The target reflects anticipated increases in cottage based hunting activity and

greater numbers of hunting opportunities that will result from habitat improvement efforts.

A growing moose population is considered significant and if the trend continues, may lead to introduction of a hunting season in the area.

The average annual fur harvest on the Crown lands of Huronia District is approximately 4,570 pelts and is achieved from 12 registered traplines. The potential for fur harvesting in the planning area may be affected by a reduction in the number of experienced trappers and changes in demand. There is some potential for increasing this fur harvest without upsetting the population/habitat balance. This potential could be realized more quickly with implementation of intensive furbearer habitat management projects.

One confirmed sighting of the Kirtlands' Warbler has been documented in the planning area. Although the habitat requirements of this species are present quality is considered limited. Annual monitoring of high potential sites will be the basis of a management program for this species.

A total of 172 species of birds including 120 nesting species have been inventoried in the planning area. In addition, 32 herptile species have been observed and eight of these are considered to be significant due to limited population sizes.

No targets for wildlife viewing have been established and there are no formal facilities on the Crown lands providing opportunities. However, it is a popular activity and Six Mile Lake Provincial Park, Gibson River Provincial Nature Reserve and Crown land access facilities including roads and access points are focal points for it.

3.4.4 Wildlife Management Stategy

The major management program is the improvement of high quality, diverse wildlife habitats particularly significant biological areas and wetlands for both game and non-game species.

The largest significant biological area (Figure 1), located in the Townships of Matchedash and Muskoka Lakes and the Town of Gravenhurst, contains the Swift Rapids deer yard and will be a focal point for the program. Other areas, especially in Rama and Georgian Bay Townships will also receive increased management activity. Wetlands occur throughout the Crown land area. Beaver populations directly affect the management of wetlands and overall, wetlands are not threatened by negative impacts.

Major elements of the wildlife management strategy for the Crown lands are:

(i) A management plan will be prepared for the Swift Rapids deer yard. Management techniques will be described in this plan. These may include research activities such as radio telemetry studies, browse

surveys, aerials surveys of core wintering areas and establishment and monitoring of weather stations. Management techniques including cutting for browse production, altering hunting seasons, planting of preferred tree species, maintenance of travel corridors, supplementary feeding in emergency situations, predator control and seeding of forest openings to improve summer food supplies will be described. This plan will be implemented in conjunction with forest management activities whenever appropriate.

(ii) Wildlife program staff will identify Crown land wetlands with the best potential to attract and support native waterfowl populations. Management of these wetlands may involve development and operation of water control structures to enhance productivity. Whenever appropriate Ducks Unlimited will be encouraged to participate in such projects.

(iii) Private individuals and groups/clubs/associations will be encouraged to become involved in wildlife management projects through the Community Wildlife Improvement Program.

(iv) Any wildlife management proposed in the provincial parks must conform to park management plans and Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies and will be reviewed by parks staff.

(v) In managing fur bearers the ministry will continue to work in cooperation with licenced trappers. Annual quotas for key species will be established. Licences will be encouraged to implement a range of management techniques designed to improve the quality and quantity of harvested pelts (e.g. planting of trees for beaver food stocks).

The ministry will continue to cooperate with trappers councils in offering training opportunities for professional development. No new traplines will be established on the Crown lands and existing lines will be maintained whenever possible.

(vi) Wildlife management programs which may affect other districts will be discussed and coordinated with ministry staff in the Minden, Bracebridge and Parry Sound Districts.

(vii) Wildlife management programs in provincially significant ANSI's will be limited to those which have no impact upon the ANSI values. Management plans/proposals which affect provincially or regionally significant ANSI's will be discussed with parks and recreation program staff prior to their implementation.

(viii) A program to monitor suitable habitat for rare and endangered species will be established. To this end, the ministry will foster cooperative arrangements with local naturalist clubs and amateur field naturalists. To the extent possible the specific habitat requirements of any rare and endangered species documented in the planning area will be protected and improved.

The ministry will encourage scientific research directed at expanding the data base for rare or endangered species present within

the district. Consideration will be given to management projects designed to increase populations.

(ix) Significant wildlife management activities which are planned to take place on an area where another program has mapped an interest will be described and circulated to the affected programs for review and if appropriate will require the approval of the District Management Committee.

## 3.5 AREAS OF NATURAL AND SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (ANSI)

### 3.5.1 Objectives

The ANSI program is a provincial program which is designed to contribute to resource conservation and protection by identifying and protecting natural landscapes and features representing the full range of biological (life science) and geological (earth science) resources.

ANSI's vary in their level of significance and are designated as either provincially, regionally or locally significant. Provincially significant sites contribute to the achievement of the ministry's protection objective.

In the ANSI's identified on Crown land the ministry will ensure that land uses and activities acknowledge the protection of the life science features identified in each area. Where they occur on private land, the ministry will advise land owners and attempt to promote an understanding of the values and encourage protection by the landowners.

### 3.5.2 Targets

To protect the five provincially significant life science features occurring in the planning area.

### 3.5.3 Resource Analysis

Within the planning area five provincially, seven regionally and one locally significant life science ANSI have been identified. No earth science ANSI's of provincial or regional significance have yet been identified. Two of the provincially significant ANSI's are situated on federal lands, one is the Gibson River Provincial Nature Reserve and two are on Crown and private land in Matchedash and Orillia Townships. One of the Regional ANSI's, Red Marsh, is adjacent to Gibson River Provincial Nature Reserve and contains life science features not found in the park. As a result, this ANSI can also contribute to the protection target.

There are five major physiographic types with distinct vegetation and landform features in the study area. Various sites have been selected to best represent the range of biological features based on selection criteria such as representativeness, habitat diversity, ecological integrity and special features. There are several representative life science ecosystems which are already protected

within provincial parks and federal parks and which also occur on other federal lands in the study area (managed by the Trent-Severn Waterway).

On Crown land outside regulated parks, the Long Lake and Matchedash Crown Land Special Study area ANSI's have been identified as containing excellent examples of the landform/vegetation relationships of this area and a large number of plant species of special significance. These special features occur in scattered locations and the sites are generally small in size. Of particular importance are the rare Altantic Coastal Plain plant species situated along the shorelines of Long, Horseshoe and Burrows Lakes. Other small sites occur on the Eastern Lakes and may have occurred on others prior to disturbance of shorelines during cottage development. A treed bog and fen is also situated within the Matchedash Crown Land Special Study Area ANSI and contains many rare and unusual plant species.

The protection of representative, undisturbed natural landscapes and special features such as unusual vegetation types is the underlying rationale for areas being identified as ANSI's. The Provincial Parks Act is also used to achieve protection objectives either through provincial nature reserves or through zoning designations and management policies in other classes of parks. Park planning and management policies provide clear direction on how various management objectives are to be achieved. In such cases natural processes are normally allowed to occur. In the Crown lands planning area use of the Provincial Parks Act to manage ANSI's through the designation of provincial nature reserves would result in changes to long established and competing resource use patterns including trapping, hunting, and possibly snowmobiling. For this reason, and with one exception, the management strategy for these areas will not employ the Provincial Parks Act.

### 3.5.4 ANSI Management Strategy

The ANSI management strategy will provide protection for significant life science areas through a combined use of the:

- Provincial Parks Act;
- present management plan;
- appropriate application of future forest, vegetation, wildlife and fisheries management programs;
- cooperation with federal and private landowners of ANSI areas.

(1) The Red Marsh regional ANSI will be placed in Provincial Parks Act regulations as an addition to the Gibson River Provincial Nature Reserve. This 100 ha ANSI will be managed according to Ontario Provincial Park Planning & Management Policies.

This will result in minor changes to some resource use activities currently occurring in the ANSI, including trapping, hunting and

PARRY SOUND DISTRICT
BONE ISLAND
McCraney Lake Wilderness Area
STARRS
BEARSHEAD LAKE
BUCKSHOOF LAKE
Thibadeau Island
Beausoleil and Associated Islands Provincial ANSI
DEER ISLAND
Wood Landing
Six Mile Lake Provincial Park
Dam
Little Beausoleil Island
Honey Harbour
Honey Harbour Park Headquarters
BEAUSOLEIL ISLAND
GEORGIAN BAY ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK
Park Maintenance Headquarters
ROBERTS ISLAND
QUARRY ISLAND
PRESENT ISLAND
SEVERN SOUND
Potato Island
GREEN ISLAND
Wye Heritage Channel
Gibson River Provincial Park
Red Marsh Regional ANSI
SIX MILE LAKE
Big Chute Provincial ANSI
GLOUCESTER POOL
Matchedash Crown Land Special Study Area Provincial ANSI
BARRON'S LAKE
GERI BAY
Hoaglands Marsh
BLACK LAKE
CRANBERRY LAKE
Port Severn
MATCHEDASH BAY
MATCHEDASH BAY TOWNSHIP
NORTH
Legend
STUDY AREA
Parry Sound
Huntsville
Bracebridge
Gravenhurst
Owen Sound
Midland
Orillia
Barrie
Lake Simcoe
Peterborough
Oshawa
Waterloo
Guelph
Kitchener
Cambridge
Toronto
LAKE ONTARIO
GEORGIAN BAY
N
NOTE: Prepared October 1980
Base information from 1980 National Topographic Series
Cartography by C. Martin
Not for legal purposes
All features are approximate and may not accurately represent the actual surveyed lines on the ground.

Figure 2

# AREAS OF NATURAL AND SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (ANSI) AND ACCESS FACILITIES

Ministry of Natural Resources Ontario

## HURONIA DISTRICT CROWN LAND PLANNING AREA

1000 0 1000 5000 METRES

- Crown Land
- Patented Land
- Provincial Park
- Indian Reserve
- Provincial Highway
- County or Municipal Road
- Local Road
- Crown Land Access Road
- Power Transmission Line
- Hamlet
- Cross-Country Ski Trail (Private)
- Snowmachine Trail (Private)
- Snowmachine Trail (Public)
- Commercial Outpost
- Recreation Camp
- Trapline Cabin
- Landfill Site
- Crown Land Quarry Permit
- Hydro Power Station
- Water-Power Lease (W.P.L. 51)
- Trent-Severn Waterway Lands
- Access Point
- Agreement Forest
- Provincial ANSI
- Regional ANSI
- Canoe Route
- Portage

NOTE: ONLY MAINTAINED TRAILS ARE SHOWN, OTHER INFORMAL TRAILS EXIST.

BRACEBRIDGE DISTRICT

MINDEN DISTRICT

Red Marsh Regional ANSI

Big Chute Provincial ANSI

Matchedash Crown Land Special Study Area

Provincial ANSI

Long Lake Provincial ANSI

Associated ANSI

Six Mile Lake Provincial Park

Gibson River Provincial Park

Morrison Landing

Port Severn

Port Stanton

Coopers Falls

Wasden Falls Mini Hydel G.S. Ontario Hydro Dam

Lock

Orillia

Lake St. George

Gravenhurst

Severn Falls (Mnr. R. Fire Headquarters)

Parry Sound

Peterborough

Toronto

Muskoka

Georgian Bay

Lake Couchiching

Lake St. John

Gama Township

Matchedash Bay

Matchedash Township

Orillia Township

Oro Township

Medonte Township

Severn River

Black River

Head River

Trent-Severn Waterway

C.P.R.

Oil Pipeline

NOTE: Prepared October 1980
Base information from 1980 National Topographic Series
Cartography by C. Martin

Not for legal purposes
All features are approximate and may not accurately represent the actual surveyed lines on the ground.

snowmobiling. Huronia District staff will coordinate implementation with Parry Sound and Bracebridge Districts in terms of lost harvesting opportunities.

Lost hunting opportunities are considered minimal.

Existing snowmobile trails will, over time, be relocated.

(ii) Where they occur on Crown lands, the provincially significant Long Lake and Matchedash Crown Land Special Study Area ANSI's will be managed by excluding the following:

- new access facilities (e.g. roads, trails, parking facilities, etc.)
  Present access facilities will remain and any changes to these will be evaluated in terms of their environmental impact on the biological features. Special efforts will be made to ensure that the trail from the Swift Road to Long Lake is impassible to motorized vehicles.

- forest management, except fire protection and control of forest insects and diseases where they threaten the biological features of the ANSI's;

- staking of mining claims or prospecting;

- disposition of Crown lands; and

- removal of sand, gravel, stone or other mineral aggregates.

Trapping, hunting and fishing will be permitted in these ANSI's and management planning for furbearers, game species and fisheries resources will incorporate into their objectives the protection of the representative and special features of these areas.

The management of Long Lake is subject to an ongoing water level monitoring program designed to establish optimum habitat conditions for shoreline communities of rare Atlantic Coastal Plain flora. This program entails artificial control of the water levels in Long Lake. Monitoring of these communities and the fishery of the lake is part of this program and will provide necessary information for the improvement of this management strategy.

Recreational trails for hiking, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling may be routed through these areas, but other motorized vehicles will not be permitted. Any changes or extensions of trail activities will be reviewed in terms of the protection of these areas.

(iii) Where they occur on private lands, the Long Lake and Matchedash Crown Land Special Study Area ANSI's will continue to be recognized in the District Land Use Guidelines as being lands of provincial significance in terms of their life science features. The ministry will provide the available background information on these

features to private landowners and will seek their cooperation in achieving protection of these natural areas.

(iv) The provincially significant Beausoleil and Associated Islands ANSI is part of Georgian Bay Islands National Park and is considered to be appropriately protected. Background information will be provided to Parks Canada in order to identify the values which are of provincial interest.

(v) The provincially significant Big Chute ANSI is located largely on federal lands of the Trent-Severn Waterway. Background biological information and program objectives will be communicated to Parks Canada and a jointly-prepared management plan is recommended as the most effective management strategy for this ANSI.

(vi) Where they occur on Crown lands, the values of regionally significant ANSI's will be considered in all forest, mineral aggregates, wildlife or fisheries management programs.

## 3.6 PROVINCIAL PARKS

### 3.6.1 Objectives

The objectives for the two provincial parks in the planning area are consistent with those set out provincially. They are to:

- protect provincially significant elements of the natural and cultural landscape of Ontario;
- provide opportunities for exploration and appreciation of the outdoor natural and cultural heritage of Ontario;
- provide provincial park outdoor recreation opportunities ranging from high intensity day use to low intensity wilderness experiences; and
- provide Ontario's residents and out-of-province visitors with opportunities to discover and experience the distinctive regions of the province.

### 3.6.2 Targets

The targets are:

To protect provincially significant life science features which contribute to the representation of the vegetative site types in site district 5-7.

To provide opportunities for exploration and appreciation of the outdoor natural and cultural heritage.

To provide annually the following recreation opportunities for Ontario residents and visitors to Six Mile Lake Provincial Park:

Day Use

50,500 swimming opportunities
18,000 picnicking opportunities

Extended Use

44,800 camping opportunities

3.6.3 Resource Analysis

Six Mile Lake Provincial Park is an 81 ha recreation class provincial park with 190 campsites and a day use capacity of 200 people. Its location on Highway 69 attracts large numbers of travellers. The campground has an annual July/August occupancy rate of 76 percent. The limited area of the park precludes expansion.

Twinning of Highway 69 will have an impact on the park, in particular on the extreme south end east of the highway and a 16 ha area west of the highway. These two areas may be deleted from the park when highway expansion occurs.

A large block (120 ha) of Crown land to the north of the park could accommodate hiking trails and other low intensity day use recreation activities. In addition, a six ha area adjacent to the existing northwest corner of the park contains several provincially rare plant species. These areas would be suitable additions to the park.

The park is one of three access points to the Gibson-McDonald canoe route and park staff are responsible for maintenance of campsites and portages on the route. Most of the campsites are situated within the McCrae Lake Wilderness Area and are heavily used. The south half of McCrae Lake and adjacent lands are within a regulation under the Wilderness Areas Act. The purpose of the Act is to permit the protection and management of special areas in a relatively undisturbed condition.

The Gibson River Provincial Nature Reserve is a 168 ha area southeast of Gibson Lake. As a nature reserve the primary objective for the park is to protect provincially significant life science features. A portion of the Five Winds Touring Club's ski trail network is routed through the park and the parking facility at the end of Muskoka Road 33 is one of three points in the Huronia District used by club members and other users to access the system. The park is bordered on all sides by Crown land and the Red Marsh regional ANSI is adjacent to the south boundary.

3.6.4. Provincial Park Management Strategy

(i) Two parcels of Crown land with a combined area of 126 ha will be placed in regulation under the Provincial Parks Act as additions to Six Mile Lake Provincial Park. They will be designated Natural

Environment Zones and will be managed according to park planning and management policies to provide low intensity day use recreation opportunities while protecting significant life science resources. Any current uses of these lands which do not conform with park management policies will be phased out or relocated.

(ii) As a major public attraction within the Crown land planning area, Six Mile Lake Provincial Park will serve as a centre for the distribution of interpretive literature and information dealing with the special features, resource management activities and recreation opportunities of the Crown lands.

(iii) A comprehensive assessment will be made of McCrae Lake Wilderness Area, the intensity of recreational uses occurring on and around it, the condition of all campsites and the health of the fishery resource. At the conclusion of the study a decision will be made on placing of the entire lake and an appropriate buffer area into regulation under the Park's Act as part of Six Mile Lake Provincial Park. The basic objectives of such a change would be to facilitate a more effective control of use of the lake and to protect life science values in the buffer area. In the interim, the area currently designated under the Wilderness Areas Act will remain in regulation.

(iv) All resource management and recreation activity planned for the Gibson River Provincial Nature Reserve (including the Red Marsh ANSI) will be subject to the Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies. Use of motorized, all terrain vehicles will not be permitted in the park.

## 3.7 GENERAL RECREATION

### 3.7.1 Objectives

The ministry provides programs and facilities for a number of recreational activities on Crown land outside provincial parks. The objectives for these programs in the planning area are to:

- provide opportunities for and to encourage participation in a wide variety of outdoor recreation activities ranging from those pursued on a day-use basis to those requiring extended periods of time; and

- contribute to the economy of the planning area through stimulation of tourism activity.

### 3.7.2 Targets

Targets for the general recreation activities have not been developed for the Huronia District Crown lands.

### 3.7.3 Resource Analysis

Crown lands and adjacent water bodies provide a high proportion of the important general recreation and tourism resources. These include Georgian Bay, the Trent-Severn Waterway, 75 percent of the district's inland lakes, the Gibson-McDonald Canoe Route, and the Crown lands themselves. Cross country skiing, snowmobiling and walking/hiking trails have been developed (some by groups and agencies) on these lands and 19 official access points are maintained throughout the area to facilitate movement to and from land and water. They provide boat docking, launching and picnicking facilities.

The access points are located on the Severn River and Six Mile Lake, McDonald Lake and Horseshoe Lake. There are no access points serving recreationists on the Huronia District portion of Georgian Bay which is home port to approximately 40 percent of the recreational boating fleet in the province. While marina facilities have increased dramatically over the past ten years the number of support facilities has barely changed both on Georgian Bay and the Trent-Severn Waterway. Numerous symptoms of this imbalance are evident, but little data exists to accurately define issues and problem areas on these water bodies. Notable among these are over-use/abuse of access point facilities conflicts between boaters and cottagers, lack of information for boaters, and no controlled mooring areas.

The access point on McDonald Lake receives high use during peak times of the spring and summer seasons. Campers combine with canoeists using the Gibson-McDonald canoe route to create extreme pressure on McCrae Lake, its Crown land campsites and its fishery resource. The access point on the southwest shore of Six Mile Lake adjacent to a small marina is also heavily used by cottagers and anglers.

An extensive recreational trail system (92 km in total) is maintained by the Five Winds Touring Club as a wilderness cross country ski trail. It is also used by hikers during spring, summer and fall seasons. Portions of the system are within three ministry districts (Huronia, Parry Sound and Bracebridge) and can be accessed from each district. Most use of the trails is by club members and all maintenance is carried out by them.

Horseshoe, Ptarmigan and Big Chute snowmobile trails are located on Crown lands and have been maintained by the ministry with assistance from the Huronia Association of Recreational Trails (HART).

Use of privately and publicly maintained cross-country ski and snowmobile trails as well as cottage and recreation access roads by all terrain vehicles particularly four-wheel drive vehicles has been identified as a serious problem. Severe damage, in some cases, renders trails impassible for the intended users.

The Gibson-McDonald is a heavily used canoe route accessible from three points; Six Mile Lake Provincial Park, McDonald Lake access point in Huronia District and the Gibson River/Highway 69 access point in Parry Sound District. Crown land campsites on the Huronia portion of the route are all in McCrae Lake.

Numerous other informal canoe routes are commonly used especially in the areas north of the Severn River and the river forms a portion of several of them.

Crown land camping occurs in numerous locations throughout the planning area. Concentrations of heavily used sites occur along the Swift Road, on Long, Horseshoe, Woodland and Boleau Lakes.

3.7.4 General Recreation Management Strategy

(i) All existing official access points will be maintained. The maintenance program will ensure that solid wastes are regularly removed, that damaged facilites are repaired/replaced as necessary, that human wastes are properly treated and that safety hazards are removed.

(ii) Problems associated with the growth in boating activity have been identified by the public. No provincial policy for dealing with these problems currently exists and there is no defined provincial mandate for the Ministry of Natural Resources. When jurisdictional responsibilities have been clarified and provincial policies for managing boating activity developed, this plan will be amended to define management actions.

(iii) A cooperative access point maintenance program will be designed and implemented as a one or two year experiment. The program may involve cottage owners association(s), marine operators, Parks Canada, canoe clubs or others and will involve a sharing of equipment and day-to-day maintenance responsibilities. An evaluation of this trial against the feasibility of such cooperative programs elsewhere may provide an alternate approach to access point management.

(iv) The staff of Six Mile Lake Provincial Park will continue to monitor and collect data on use of McCrae Lake by canoeists and other recreationists. Concurrently, measures designed to effect control of the number of users on McDonald and McCrae Lakes will be implemented at the McDonald Lake access point. These may include a permit control system administered through Six Mile Lake Provincial Park, reducing the size of the parking lot, using numbered parking spaces, or closing campsites on McCrae Lake.

The success of the above management techniques will be assessed as part of a comprehensive evaluation of McCrae Lake and the lands surrounding it (see section 3.6.4).

(v) Recreational trail systems will continue to provide year round opportunities for the public to participate in a range of recreational activities. Trail development/maintenance by private organizations will be allowed and will be managed through issuance of Land Use Permits. Trail alignments will be reviewed and approved by District Lands Administration staff prior to construction.

(vi) Use of trails at any time by motorcycles and vehicles weighing over 500 kg will be considered inappropriate on Crown lands and will not be permitted. Problem areas will be signed under the Public

Lands Act and appropriate enforcement measures will be applied. Physical barriers will be constructed when necessary, in strategic locations to prevent access by all terrain vehicles.

(vii) The ministry will continue to manage the Gibson-McDonald as an official canoe route.

(viii) The ministry will evaluate other potential canoe routes in the Crown land planning area with a view to shifting use pressure away from the Gibson-McDonald route. Evaluation of some routes will involve discussions with staff of Bracebridge District.

(ix) Crown land camping will continue to be an important recreational activity. The ministry will continually monitor the activity to identify problems of over use/abuse. If necessary, an interior access permit system will be implemented.

## 3.8 LAND ADMINISTRATION

### 3.8.1 Objectives

The objective for land administration in Ontario is to facilitate the orderly development and conservation of Ontario's land and water resources.

### 3.8.2 Targets

Specific land administration targets have not been developed.

### 3.8.3 Resource Analysis

Almost all of the roads constructed on the Crown lands are to provide vehicle access into cottage properties. While no new cottage lots have been patented and sold in the district since 1968, numerous cottages are not currently served by road.

Responsibility for road construction and maintenance lies with individuals and groups of cottage owners. The ministry regulates the construction through a location approval process, with the exception of Rama Township, by issuing work permits under the Forest Fires Prevention Act. Ownership of the road rights-of-way are retained by the Crown.

Two Crown land resource access roads are maintained by the ministry; Swift Road (12.5 km) and Horseshoe Lake Road (2.5 km). Both provide access for a wide range of recreational activities during spring, summer and fall seasons and both form portions of snowmobile trails in the winter. The Swift Road also provides access to lands owned by Orillia Water, Light and Power and the Trent-Severn Waterway. Employees of both agencies use the road daily and it has been periodically used by large equipment during major construction/repair projects at the hydro electric power station and marine navigation lock.

The Horseshoe Lake Road is closed to vehicle traffic during spring, summer and early fall seasons, but is used by anglers, bicyclists, hikers, cyclists and campers.

Dispositions affecting Crown lands take the form of outright sale and patent of land, the granting of land use permits, leases, licences of occupation and letters of permission.

Land Use Permits are used to administer the Five Winds Touring Club's cross country ski trail network, some privately maintained snowmobile trail as well as three commercial outpost camps and three recreation camps. Letters of permission authorized the erecting and maintaining of six small trapline cabins.

3.8.4. Land Administration Strategy

(i) New cottage access road proposals prepared by groups/associations of cottagers will be reviewed by the ministry to ensure that the proposed roads do not have a significant detrimental effect on natural resources.

(ii) The ministry will encourage multiple use of cottage access roads to achieve resource access objectives. In some special cases the ministry will assist financially with road development and/or maintenance. Where temporary forest access roads connect with cottage access roads, funding for repair of roads necessitated by removal of forest products will be secured from the timber operator.

(iii) The Swift Road will be maintained by the ministry as a recreation access road. Orillia Water, Light and Power and the Trent-Severn Waterway will be requested to pay the cost of repairs necessitated by use of the road during major repair/development projects. If the ministry is unable to maintain the road, it will be closed at the Long Lake portage initially. If necessary to ensure public safety, the road could be closed at the east side of the County Forest property at the start of the road in Lot 3, Concession 7, Township of Matchedash.

(iv) Horseshoe Lake Road will be maintained as a recreation access road and will be closed to all motor vehicle traffic between April 1 and September 15 each year.

(v) No new permanent access roads will be developed in the Huronia Crown land planning area by the Ministry of Natural Resources. Temporary resource access roads will be developed as needed to achieve forest and wildlife habitat management objectives. These roads will be closed to all vehicle traffic when the management activities are completed. Alignment of temporary roads will avoid lake access and provide only controlled access during the period of operation. All temporary access road proposals will be subject to approval by the District Management Committee and will be subject to the conditions of the class environmental assessment for access road construction.

(vi) There will be no sales of Crown lands. The only exception to this policy will be for disposition of certain shoreline reserves, water lots, lands required by other government agencies and public utilities and for commercial enterprises where Crown land is required to secure its economic viability.

(vii) Rental of Crown lands for private or commercial purposes may be granted. Approval to rent land must be reviewed by the District Management Committee.

(viii) Dumping of fill and other materials and the construction of docks, marinas or other recreational facilities on Crown land will be regulated under the Public Lands Act.

## 3.9 WATER

### 3.9.1 Objectives

The objectives for water management in the Crown land planning area are to:

. reduce flooding potentials in developed near-shore areas through regulation of water levels;

. protect fisheries resources; and

. protect special botanical features located along shorelines.

### 3.9.2 Targets

No targets have been established for water management programs.

### 3.9.3 Resource Analysis

Water resources of the Crown lands are extensive, varied and, in the case of the Trent-Severn Waterway, highly significant. Eighty percent of the Crown lands are in the Severn River drainage basin while the remainder is in the Moon River/Go Home Lake Basin.

The ministry manages only one water control structure on the Crown lands (Long Lake dam). One other dam, Wasdell Falls, is owned by the ministry but, it and 17 others are managed by the Trent-Severn Waterway. The Waterway's water management program is designed to ensure that adequate water supplies are available to satisfy requirements of marine navigation, hydro electric power generation at Swift Rapids, Big Chute and Wasdell Falls, domestic and commercial use and to reduce flooding potentials in Sparrow Lake, Lake St. John, Six Mile Lake and along the Severn River in Washago. Management of the Long Lake dam has been discussed in section 3.5.4.

The ministry is concerned with flooding, primarily where it affects private lands. Flooding of Crown land is generally not considered to be a problem but on Six Mile Lake high water may impact shoreline

facilities within Six Mile Lake Provincial Park. The ministry works with Waterway staff to reduce flooding potentials through preparation of flood line mapping and the plan review process.

A limiting element in the management of the Severn River basin water levels is that the Black River/Head River watershed is completely uncontrolled.

The ministry is concerned with the effects of water level fluctuations on the fishery resource of the Trent-Severn Waterway. The timing and amount of drawdowns are monitored by the ministry to ensure that spawning and nursery habitat is protected.

The ministry has been made aware of the existance of an historic water course linking Black Lake and the Severn River above Swift Rapids. Blind dams erected during development of the Trent-Severn Water, have blocked the flow of water. Interest has been expressed by residents of the Township of Matchedash, in having water diverted from the Severn River into the system. One possible benefit of such a diversion would be the improvement of water quality in Black Lake as a result of increase water flows.

### 3.9.4 Water Management Strategy

(i) The ministry will work with the Trent-Severn Waterway to reduce flooding potentials on Six Mile Lake and other locations.

(ii) Fisheries spawning and nursery habitat in the Trent-Severn Waterway and associated water bodies will be monitored and ministry staff will seek the cooperation of Waterway staff in managing water levels to protect the habitat.

(iii) The proposed diversion of water from the Severn River will be evaluated by the ministry in terms of its potential impacts on natural resources on the Crown lands. However, because of the complex nature of the hydrological resources involved any implementation will require further study of all affected agencies, individuals and interest groups.

(iv) The Ministry of Natural Resources will co-operate with the Ontario Ministry of Energy in its efforts to fully develop/redevelop the hydro electric power production potential of identified sites within the planning area. These sites are: Washago dams, Wasdell Falls dam, Swift Rapids, Big Chute, Port Severn.

## 4. PLAN REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

The ministry will proceed to implement the management strategies of this plan through to the year 2000.

Every five years the plan will be subject to review coordinated by the District Management Committee. This review will seek to answer three questions:

. Are the objectives and targets still considered to be realistic and achievable or have underlying factors changed significantly?

. Are the management strategies resulting in achievement of the objectives and targets?

. Are the management strategies encouraging integrated resource management to the fullest extent possible.

Depending upon the answers to these questions, the plan may be amended. When required, the amending process will be coordinated by the District Management Committee. As provided for in various management strategies in this plan, data collection and analysis may be required before a decision to amend can be made.

Minor alterations which do not represent significant changes in management strategy or in the utilization of resources will be made on the basis of an internal review and approval procedure. Major alterations representing significant changes in targets and/or in management strategies will be made only after public notice has been given. Such notice will provide relevant background information, a statement of the purpose for each proposed amendment and will invite the public to provide input to assist in the amendment process. Public input will then be considered in preparing final amendments to the plan.

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APPENDIX A: Summary of Public Consultation

PHASE ONE

The public consultation component of the Huronia District Crown Land Planning Program consists of four phases. Phase one was implemented following distribution of the planning program Terms of Reference document to local interest groups, municipalities, interested individuals and neighbouring districts of the Ministry of Natural Resources. Two forums were hosted by the ministry's Crown land planning team at the Severn Falls Fire Headquarters. Municipal councils and their staff were invited to the first forum on August 14th, 1985. .It's format consited of a presentation by selected planning team members and a question and answer period. The second forum on August 22, 1985 followed an open house format and the local interest groups were invited to send representatives. Attendance at the two forums was approximately 16 and 60 respectively.

The principal objectives of this phase were to inform the concerned publics of the planning programs start-up, purpose, objectives and timetable and to canvas them for issues/concerns requiring attention during the program.

A meeting with Matchedash Township Council also occurred on August 15, 1985 to discuss the council's concerns.

Following Phase One, an initial listing of the issues and concerns identified to date was prepared. It contained the following items:

1. Disposition of Crown lands
   a. to municipalities
   b. to private concerns via municipalities
   c. special cases involving very small areas

2. Access
   a. to Crown land from water
      - re-establish maintenance program for existing network of access points
      - expand the network in response to greatly increased size of recreation boating public
      - add a network of mooring pins to system
   b. to water from Crown land
      - heavy use of some existing points
      - review rationale behind seasonally restricted access to Horseshoe Lake
      - expansion of network

3. Resource Access Roads
   - maintenance of existing roads
   - new road requirements for forest access, wildlife management, fire management

4. Significant biological species and species habitat - identification and protection.

5. Possible designation of candidate Provincial Park status for provincially significant ANSI's.
   - Identification of other options for ensuring protection

6. Trail based recreation activities
   - traditional activities - i.e. snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, hiking.
   Ongoing trail construction and maintenance responsibilities.

7. Trail based recreation activities
   - new activities i.e. All terrain cycling and four-wheeling.
   Control of activity presently occurring on inappropriate locations.
   Possible designation of a Crown land area for these activities.

8. Canoe routes:
   1. Management of use of Gibson-McDonald route to protect shoreline and reflect system capacity.
   2. Designation and promotion of a new route in Township of Muskoka Lakes and Town of Gravenhurst to draw pressure off Gibson-McDonald.

9. Water management
   - flood reduction on Black and Head Rivers and Sparrow Lake
   Flow augmentation through Black Lake utilizing a derelict system through Matchedash Township from the Severn River.

10. Fisheries management in inter-regional lakes i.e. Brotherson, Narrow, McCrae & Sparrow.

11. Cottage access roads
    New proposals

12. Trapping - Maintenance of status quo vs. reduction of activity.

13. Identification of opportunities for development of commercial, recreation related, business.

14. Tea Lake - access from Severn River

15. Idenfification of areas with agricultural potential.

16. Implementation - will adequate support in terms of funding and staff positions be provided to deliver the plan's programs?

17. Fisheries management in Long Eastern, Boleau, Woodland Lakes.
    Maintenance of fishing opportunities and control of over-utilization of outpost camps.

18. Deer habitat management - more effort is required especially for management of small satellite yards.

The above was then condensed by the ministry's planning team to create the list upon which the Issues Discussion Paper, June 1986 was based.

PHASE TWO

Phase two of the public consultation component was based upon and began with public release of two documents; Issues Discussion Paper and Background Information Report. The intent of the discussion paper was,.."to stimulate an exchange of ideas between the Ministry of Natural Resources and other government agencies, local residents,...resource users, with an interest in the management of the Crown lands..." The background report contains six maps as well as general descriptive information on all natural and cultural resources of the planning area. It serves as the primary supporting reference source for the discussion paper and the management plan in preparation.

In the discussion paper each of the 11 issues was described and appropriate optional management scenarios presented. For each issue a preferred management option was identified along with a statement of rationale.

Three hundred copies of each of the two documents were mailed to local and provincial interest groups (also includes selected national interest groups), government agencies, municipalities and interested individuals. An internal MNR circulation to neighbouring districts and Algonquin Region and to Executive Coordinators and the Policy and Planning Secretariat also occurred.

The Huronia District Office received 82 documented submissions. This includes verbal submissions each of which has been recorded on a Record of Verbal Transaction form. It also includes eight submissions from other MNR offices.

The total public input originated as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Local Interest Groups | 19 |
| Municipalities | 4 |
| Provincial Interest Groups | 7 |
| Government Agencies | 9 |
| Individuals | 29 |
| Others | 6 |
| Subtotal | 74 |
| MNR | 8 |
| Total | 82 |

Public response to the Issues Discussion Paper has been used by the planning team in developing management strategies and establishing production/utilization targets set out in the preliminary management plan. Some issues received considerably more attention than others.

The following briefly summarizes the dominant point of view on each of those issues which have become the important or major ones. The ministry response as represented by proposed management strategy is also presented.

1. Life Science Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI's). Public response indicated that use of the Provincial Parks Act ie. designation of nature reserve parks would be unacceptable if trapping, hunting and fishing opportunities were lost as a result.

The Federation of Ontario Naturalists requested that the proposed nature reserves be enlarged to include ecologically viable ecosystems.

The ministry position is that the protection objectives of the ANSI program can be achieved in the planning area without creating negative impacts upon traditional user groups. All ministry programs will be sensitive to the ANSI objectives.

2. Disposition of Crown Land

With few exceptions respondents were opposed to any further dispositions within the planning area.

The land management strategy states that there will be no sales of Crown land for private non-commercial purposes, with minor exceptions. However, where Crown land is clearly required to ensure the ecomonic viability of an existing or new commercial enterprise, land may be sold. Land will also be sold to goverment agencies and public utilities.

3. Trail Based Recreation

There was very little support from respondents for development of trails for motorized trailing activities. The ministry is proposing to restrict motorcycles and other motorized vehicles weighting more than 500 kg from Crown land. Enforcement, signage and barricades will all be used to implement this strategy.

4. Cottage Access Roads and Access - General

Many respondents expressed opposition to development of any new roads in the planning area. However, some are concerned that they have the same opportunity to obtain road access to their cottage properties as others have had.

The ministry is proposing that new cottage access proposals will be accepted and attempts will be made to find the best possible alignments respecting special vegetative features and other resource values. Access road development by the ministry will be limited to the minimum number of "temporary" access roads needed to achieve resource production targets.

5. Swift Road

Regular users of the road indicate that recreational use of the road is significant and that O.W.L.P. and T.S.W. staff use represents only 10 percent of the traffic. Because of this the ministry is obligated to maintain the facility.

The ministry will endeavour to maintain the road in a safe condition for vehicle traffic. However, financial constraints may result in less and less maintenance and for public safety the ministry may be forced to barricade it. This would first be implemented at the Long Lake portage.

6. Access Point Network

Problems being created as a result of the rapid increase in recreational boating combined with the lack of an adequate access point network, especially on Georgian Bay and the Trent-Severn Waterway were clearly set out in an excellent brief. Other respondents were supportive of maintaining the network and in the case of some heavily used points, expanding facilities.

The ministry is proposing to maintain the existing network. Expansion of government services to boaters cannot be realized until lines of authority have been defined. The district will continue to monitor the problem.

**Additional copies of this document may be obtained from the**
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